

## Wiki in Pakistan: Filling in the missing jigsaw pieces

SAQIB QAYYUM CHOUDHRY — UPDATED OCT 14, 2014 11:10PM



The majority of Pakistani readers don't know that they can easily contribute to Wikipedia themselves.

### **Few Pakistanis realise how valuable the knowledge that they possess really is.**

What you know can be imparted to thousands of people on the internet, impacting countless lives and events, while spreading better awareness of Pakistani topics across the globe.

The predominant way that happens these days is, of course, Wikipedia.

Wikipedia – the online encyclopedia that covers nearly everything – and its popularity has a lot to do with the fact that it's free, non-commercial, and has become more than an authority on virtually every possible subject. Available in almost 300 languages, it aims to give mankind access to the sum of all human knowledge in their respective languages.

However, although it is a giant, Wikipedia is still a work in progress.

*Read about Wikipedia's photo contest: [Awaiting images worth a thousand words!](#)*

Haven't you noticed the missing pieces of jigsaw at top of the Wikipedia globe logo? That hole is there precisely because the encyclopaedia isn't done yet. In fact, the site is just barely getting started and will remain unfinished for decades to come.

In Pakistan, Wikipedia is the one of the most popular sites amongst the country's 30 million internet users. Hundred of thousands of us visit it daily, and millions visit the site monthly; But despite our addiction to the site, Pakistan-related topics are seriously under-represented on Wikipedia.

Of about three million monthly edits to the English Wikipedia from across the globe, only a tiny 8,000 are from Pakistan.

Why? Because the majority of Pakistani readers don't know that they can easily contribute to Wikipedia themselves.

*Explore:* [YouTube – no news is ‘bad’ news](#)

In this regard, Pakistan is lagging way behind other countries in the world. Of the more than 20,000 Pakistan-related articles, fewer than 50 are deemed to be of high quality.

Most articles are extremely short, written poorly and lack balanced, reliable information. On the other hand, the best written ones have a sizeable readership; the article on "Pakistan" itself is read by almost three million people each year.

Then, there is the language issue. Because most of our internet users browse the web in English, our national language, Urdu, is extremely under-represented on Wikipedia; only around one per cent of Pakistani visits are to the Urdu Wikipedia. Much of the editing in our languages is done from outside of Pakistan, even though people living here would obviously have the most reliable, detailed knowledge of the country.

In comparison, India enjoys much better coverage; India-related topics tend to be more detailed and developed.

Wiki editors for India have made their country far more visible on the web than Pakistan is. In a dramatic example, the 2008 Mumbai attacks have more than a dozen articles on Wikipedia, but the [2007 Karachi bombing](#) has only one article – even though both events resulted in similar casualties.

The [ongoing war in northwest Pakistan](#), which has over 50,000 civilian casualties plus more as its background, has the most unsatisfactory coverage.

*Read on:* [Wikipedia founder backs 'good causes' mobile operator](#)

Please understand that this is no fault of Wikipedia itself. The problem rests with us – the Pakistani internet users who, despite being the best source of input on their country's culture, history, people and geography; do not step forward to contribute their knowledge.

Wikipedia relies entirely on hundreds of thousands of regular contributors from every country across the globe – people like you and me – who volunteers for free whenever they can, to improve it.

They do this because they love the idea of free knowledge for everyone on earth, and because anyone with online access can make the edits; anyone with so much as a mobile phone with access to the internet.

*Also read:* [Grammatically yours: 'Gullu' may make it to Oxford Dictionary](#)

I would like to request all Pakistanis out there to join this international project; use your knowledge to let each other and the outside world know everything about Pakistan.

You get to decide what you'll contribute, as long as it's accurate and balanced. Existing community members are more than willing to answer your questions and help, if you ask.

Access to free knowledge, and the task of preserving knowledge related to Pakistan, is too important to ignore. And when you can so easily be a part of this grand scheme, there's no real excuse for not chipping in.

If you like the idea of sharing knowledge, or are not satisfied with things you see on Wikipedia, please join in and just do it yourself. You can do this without registering – but registering is quick, private, and easy, and lets you communicate with other editors around the world.

It can be a fun, social and educational activity, all for the very noble cause of conveying the right information on Pakistan.

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The writer is a volunteer Wikipedia editor and representative of Wikimedia affiliate in Pakistan.

He can be reached at saqib.qayyum@hotmail.com. And tweets @Wikimedia\_PK

Courtesy: DAWN <http://www.dawn.com/news/1137919/wiki-in-pakistan-filling-in-the-missing-jigsaw-pieces>

IOAJ <https://iaoj.wordpress.com/2016/06/28/wiki-in-pakistan-filling-in-the-missing-jigsaw-pieces/#more-47490>

Compiled by : Jogi Asad Ali (Admin Sindhi Wikipedia) (sagarasad125@gmail.com)